STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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Reply to: **All Local Agencies Memorandum No. 04-13**

Date:	December 13, 2004	Information- X
		Policy- X
TO:	X-LA WIC Coordinators	Action- X
	X-Satellites	
		Routine (hard copy only) - X
		Urgent (fax and hard copy)-
FROM:	Kathleen Wayne	
	State WIC Director	

SUBJECT: State Technical Assistance Review (STAR) Policy Changes

This LA Memo is in response to the State Technical Assistance Review of the Alaska WIC Program conducted on June 20-25, 2004. Below are the areas that the USDA requires changes to the Alaska WIC Program Policies. Our response to their review is underlined.

Documentation of Income

1. Income Documentation: The Federal WIC Regulations states that a description of the document used to determine income eligibility must be noted or a copy of the documentation included in the certification file.

Response:
Current paycheck stubs or earnings statements, W-2 forms with the corresponding income tax return, check stubs from unemployment compensation checks, a letter from the employer, or other appropriate documents sufficient for establishing the current family income level of the entire economic unit are acceptable forms of documentation. Someone in the community (such as a community health representative, social service worker, minister, priest or rabbi) may provide verification of income. Applicants must submit documentation substantiating reported income for all members of the economic unit.

- A photocopy of the actual documentation placed in the participant's file is optimal. It may be more practical to place a notation in the file of the specific types(s) of documentation that were viewed.
- Notation in the "Office Use Only" box on the Family Information Form or
- Notation in the text field of the (Family Comments) section in the computer.

This procedure should be followed for both regular and adjunctive eligibility documentation. The signature of the WIC staff person on the "Office Use Only" portion of the application form is accepted as verification that the staff person examined, and accepted as valid, the documentation provided by the applicant. Notation of the

type of document viewed is required, along with the signature of the WIC staff. Chapter 1-16 of the Policies and Procedures.

Documentation of Residency and Identity

2. Identity and Residence Documentation: The Federal WIC Regulations state that the type of document provided for proof of identity and residency must be consistently and accurately recorded.

Response:
 A photocopy of documents in participant files is ideal. For practical purposes, it may be more feasible to make a notation of the type of documents (e.g., current driver's license, pay stubs, etc.) that were viewed which validate residency and identity.
- Notation in the "Office Use Only" box on the Family Information Form or
- Notation in the text field of the (Family Comments) section in the computer.

Notation of the type of document viewed is required, along with the signature of the WIC staff. Chapter 1-10 of the Policy and Procedures.

Rights and Responsibilities

3. Rights and Responsibilities Form: Alaska must separate the release of eligibility information (participant name and address) to health agencies for referral and out reach purpose only from sharing of health and medical information and data. A separate, individual release form must be used for release of medical/health information and it should not be discussed prior to the completion of eligibility determination. Release of that information is voluntary on the part of the participant.

Response:
A new Rights and Responsibilities form was developed in response to the above recommendations. Please see the attached Rights and Responsibilities form.

Referrals

4. Referrals: State and local agencies are required to provide program applicants and participants with information on health-related and public assistance programs and, when appropriate, refer applicants and participants to such programs. State agency needs to clarify its policy and procedures with all local agencies, including where and how to document such referrals.

Response:
A draft revised "Referral" list to be implemented in the computer system is attached. The current revised policy on "Referrals" is listed below.

Local agencies are required to make information on the following available to all adults applying or re-applying for themselves or on behalf of others:

- Medicaid Referral Requirement
  - Local Agencies are required to provide <u>written</u> material on Medicaid/DKC services and income guidelines.

Federal welfare reform initiatives eliminate required referrals to the Food Stamp Program, ATAP and CSE from federal regulations, but the state of Alaska continues to require these referrals for:

- Food Stamp Program
- Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT)
- Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP- formerly known as AFDC)
- Immunizations
- Child Support Enforcement (CSE)

Local agencies are required to coordinate services, and develop referral systems with the following local health care providers, if the programs exist in their geographical service area:
- Prenatal and postnatal care programs
- Immunization programs
- Family planning programs
- Healthy Families
- EPSDT
- Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)
- School clinics
- Well-child programs
- Community health centers
- Breastfeeding promotion entities
- Substance abuse prevention and treatment programs
- Child protective services
- Dental services
- Domestic violence prevention and intervention programs
- Food Banks and other food assistance programs
- Homeless facilities
- Infant Learning Programs (ILP)
- Foster care agencies
- Public Assistance

The primary referral methods used by local agencies for referral to other health care and social service programs include:
- Verbal referrals to participants
- Telephone calls to referral agencies
- Written literature on referral agencies

Referral documentation can be done in one of the following areas:
- In the computer on the "Certification Tab", use the drop down box and select one or more referrals in the "Services Referred To" area or
- Document the referral in the text field of the (Family Comments) section in the computer.

Current revisions to these affected policies will be available on the Alaska WIC Web site December, 2004.

attachment: Rights and Responsibilities